

HALSTEAD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

FIRST DIVISION OF THE DISTRICT

For the Year ended 31st December, 1909.

The District is undulating. The subsoil is various, clay and gravel, the former predominating. The chief occupation of the people throughout the district is agriculture. At Earls Colne there is a Foundry employing about 300 men, and a Silk Factory employing about 100 women and girls. Many of the houses in the district are old and consist of lath and plaster, with thatched roofs, and not being provided with a damp proof course are damp, and in some instances the site is naturally a damp one. Repairs are carried out as soon as possible where defects are found.

All new houses are inspected before habitation certificates are granted to ensure a proper water supply, satisfactory drainage and sanitary arrangements; but in the absence of building bye-laws no other restriction is placed upon owners intending to build.

The Housing of the Working Classes Act 1890.

The following houses have been erected during the year :—

Halstead Rural : A new Lodge-house has been erected at Stanstead Hall, and water supplied from the Hall by means of a ram.

Earls Colne : Seven new houses have been erected, and water laid on from the Atlas Works

Sewers and Sewer Ditches.

The sewers at Earls Colne are flushed periodically every month, and the sewer ditches at Colne Engaine are cleaned out when necessary.

The district is fairly supplied with water generally, the majority of houses having a supply on the premises, but mostly from shallow wells. In localities where houses have not good water on the premises, the supply is taken from public wells under the control of the Sanitary authority. The lower part of Earls Colne and White Colne are in need of a better supply. One new well has been sunk on the premises of an old house in George Lane, Earls Colne, and two public wells, one at Halstead Rural and one at Pebmarsh have been repaired and cleaned out.



Cow Sheds and
Dairies.

There are 28 registered Cowsheds and Dairies in the district, all of which are periodically inspected, and, since the adoption of bye-laws, the majority have been renovated and are now generally satisfactory.

With the exception of Earls Colne, the remainder of the district is so scattered that great difficulty would be experienced in proper treatment of sewage, and only certain localities can be effectively dealt with. The privy system is mostly in vogue, being substituted wherever possible by pail and earth closets. House refuse is either buried in garden ground, burnt up, or carted away, periodically, whenever necessary. Great attention is given to the house surroundings in the course of inspections.

All suspicious cases of illness are reported to me by the Head Teachers of the Elementary Schools, and children from infected houses and areas are excluded from school for a period.

Two filthy houses at Pebmarsh have been cleansed Eight dilapidated houses have been placed in habitable repair.

Three cases of overcrowding have been abated, one at Halstead Rural and two at Earls Colne.

Infectious cases, where isolation cannot be carried out at home, are removed to the Council's Isolation Hospital at Hedingham or to the Halstead Urban Isolation Hospital by arrangement. The houses and fabrics are subsequently fumigated and disinfected.

All deaths from Phthisis are notified to me by the Registrar of Deaths, and the houses afterwards disinfected.

Bakehouses and
Slaughter-houses.

Nine bakehouses and seven slaughter-houses in the district have all been inspected and found in proper order. The slaughter-houses are visited quarterly and at other intervals. All the cattle slaughtered are reared in the district and inspections of carcasses are made at each visit. No diseased meat has been discovered during the year. The Council has not at present made any arrangements for the examination of suspected tuberculosis in cows by a Veterinary Surgeon.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES (NOTIFICATION) ACT 1889.

The following cases were notified during the year :—

Erysipelas.

January	6.	BALTHOLOMEW, R., aged 19 years, Earls Colne.
February	1.	HALLS, PHILIP, aged 64 years, Earls Colne.
February	17.	BURST, ANNIE, aged 21 years, Earls Colne.
March	30.	LEATHERDALE, MRS., aged 60 years, White Colne.
March	30.	MARCHANT, MRS., aged 47 years, Earls Colne.
April	5.	PERCIVAL, MRS. WM., aged 48 years, Earls Colne.
April	12.	CROOK, MISS MARY, aged 45 years, Earls Colne.
November	15.	WATKINSON, MRS., aged 67 years, Earls Colne.
November	22.	SAUNDERS, MRS., aged 27 years, Earls Colne.
September	23.	WEAVERS, GRACE, aged 10 years, White Colne.
September	29.	BUSH, WILLIE, aged 4 years, Pebmarsh.
October	4.	PAXTON, KATE, aged 21 years, Colne Engaine.
November	9.	PAGE, ROSE, aged 7 years, Pebmarsh.

Scarlet Fever.



The Scarlet Fever cases at White Colne and Colne Engaine arose in those attending the Wakes Colne School, one an assistant mistress and the other a scholar. I acquainted the Medical Officer of Health for the district and supplied the names of the cases. The origin of the cases at Pebmarsh was difficult to explain.

Zymotic Case Rate.

The Zymotic case rate was 2·74 per thousand of estimated population to middle of 1909.

Factories and Workshops.

These have all been inspected and are in a satisfactory condition.

Births.

During the year 78 births were registered, of which 31 were males and 47 females. Six illegitimate births were registered. The birth rate was 16.25 per thousand of population estimated to middle of 1909. The number of births in 1908 was 106, and in 1907, 99. The births were distributed amongst the various parishes as follows :—Halstead (Rural), 10; Earls Colne, 34; White Colne, 6; Colne Engaine, 11; Pebmarsh, 7; Little Maplestead, 3; and Gosfield, 7

Deaths.

During the year 39 deaths were registered (excluding 7 in the Union Workhouse belonging to the District), 19 being males and twenty females. The corrected Death Rate was 9·71 per thousand of population estimated to middle of 1909. The number of deaths registered in 1908 was 57 and in 1907 51. The deaths were distributed in the various parishes as follows :—Halstead (Rural), 8, plus 2 in Workhouse; Earls Colne, 13 plus 2 in Workhouse; White Colne, 4; Colne Engaine, 1, plus one in Workhouse; Pebmarsh, 5; Little Maplestead, 1, plus one in Workhouse; and Gosfield, 7, plus one in Workhouse.

Zymotic Death Rate.

The Zymotic Death Rate was nil—no deaths having occurred from any of the seven Zymotic diseases.

Infant Death Rate.

The Infant Death Rate was 51·2, and is measured by the proportion of deaths of Infants under 1 year to births registered and is expressed as so many per thousand births. This year it included one from Rickets, one from Intestinal Obstruction, one from Congenital Malformation, and one from Acute Nephritis. All these cases were unavoidable, with the exception of the case of Rickets, and this is a disease connected with nutrition and is often induced by improper food. This Death Rate is very satisfactory.

Causes of Death.

Five deaths were due to Phthisis and tubercular affections; six to Chest affections (Pneumonia and Bronchitis); four to Cancer; six to Heart Disease; and twenty-five to all other diseases. Four were those of Children under one year; none between 1 and 5 years of age; one between 5 and 15 years of age; three between 15 and 25 years of age; ten between 25 and 65 years of age; and twenty-eight were over 65 years of age. The mortality from Cancer was not so high, and the deaths from Phthisis and

other Tubercular diseases do not increase. The causes of death of the remainder need no comment from me, more than one half having attained, and in many cases exceeded, sixty-five years of age. The natural increase of population was thirty-two.

Table I.
(*annexed*).

Contains Vital Statistics of whole district during 1909 and previous years.

Table II.
(*annexed*).

Contains Vital Statistics of separate localities in 1909 and previous years.

Table III.
(*annexed*).

Contains cases of Infectious Diseases notified during the year 1909.

Table IV.
(*annexed*).

Contains causes of and ages at death during the year 1909.

Table V.
(*annexed*).

Contains Infant Mortality during the year 1909.

J. Henry Ashworth M.D.; M.R.C.P.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

Halstead, February 23, 1910.

